

**Remarks**

Claims 1 – 17 remain pending. New claims 4 - 17 have been added herein.

**Request for Reconsideration and Allowance**

Based upon the above Amendments and Remarks, claims 1-17 are believed to be in proper form for allowance, and patentable over the prior art made of record. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of those claims and a prompt Notice of Allowance thereon.

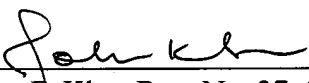
Additional fees necessitated by this correspondence may be charged to Deposit Account 12-0449.

Please direct any questions or comments regarding this application to John F. Klos at (952) 896-1520.

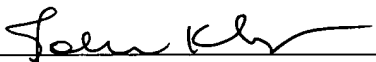
Respectfully submitted,

John Potter, by his attorneys,

Date: March 6, 2001

  
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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR 1.8:** I hereby certify that this paper and any papers referred to herein are being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service, as first class mail, postage prepaid, addressed to the Honorable Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on March 6, 2001.

  
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John F. Klos

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE (3/02/01)**

4. (new) A modular deck panel for a deck structure including a plurality of horizontal support elements, said modular deck panel comprising:

a first substantially planar element being relatively inflexible and of a material selected from among the group including: stone, mineral, tile, and concrete product; and

a second substantially planar element of a material different than the first planar element, said second planar element being disposed beneath the first planar element and coupled thereto, said second planar element having a predetermined total area, said second planar element supporting the deck panel upon the deck structure at a panel support area, said panel support area being substantially smaller than the predetermined total area, and said second planar element carrying substantially all of a tensile load imposed upon the deck panel.

5. (new) A modular deck panel of claim 4 wherein the first planar element is adhesively secured to the second planar element.

6. (new) A modular deck panel of claim 4 wherein the second planar element is of a composite material.

7. (new) A modular deck panel of claim 4 wherein the panel support area is proximate a periphery of the deck panel.

8. (new) A modular deck panel of claim 4 wherein the panel support area is proximate a pair of opposed edges of the deck panel.

9. (new) A modular deck panel of claim 4 wherein the first planar element and second planar element are equivalent in size.

10. (new) A modular deck panel of claim 4 wherein the first planar element and second planar element are generally square in shape.

11. (new) A modular deck panel of claim 4 wherein the panel support areas cooperate with portions of the horizontal support elements of the deck structure.

12. (new) A deck structure comprising:

a deck frame including a series of transversely extending joists arranged at a uniform close spacing in the longitudinal direction of the deck structure; and

a series of modular panels arranged in abutting relationship overlying and secured to said joists, each panel being of a composite layered construction including a top side and a bottom side, each panel including a first layer element defining the top side and of a material providing substantial compressive strength and limited tensile strength, each panel further including a second layer element defining the bottom side and coupled to the first layer element, said second layer element of a material providing substantial tensile strength, the panels being arranged longitudinally such that they abut over said joists, the abutting ends of the panels being secured to the underlying joists by a fastening structure.

13. (new) A building product for flooring an area of substructure, said building product comprising:

a plurality of modular panels arranged in abutting relationship overlying and secured to the substructure, each panel being of a composite layered construction including a top side and a bottom side, each panel including a first layer element defining the top side and of a material providing substantial compressive strength and limited tensile strength, each panel further including a second layer element defining the bottom side and coupled to the first layer element, said second layer element of a material providing substantial tensile strength.

14. (new) A building product according to claim 13 wherein the substructure is defined by a deck structure and includes a plurality of spaced joists, and wherein the plurality of modular panels are secured to the spaced joists.

15. (new) A building product according to claim 13 wherein the panels being arranged longitudinally such that they abut over said joists, the abutting ends of the panels being secured to the underlying joists by a fastening structure.

16. (new) A building product of claim 13 wherein the first layer element is adhesively secured to the second layer element.

17. (new) A building product of claim 13 wherein the second layer element is of a composite material.